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give me a licking?" he said quietly. "I was a fine specimen of a tough in those days, Rice, and the other fellows in the line could not have been much better."

Rice, having nothing to say, remained silent, and Bob was consoled for past injuries by half of a juicy kidney.

WHEN in New York, Waverton had purchased a typewriter. His right wrist was still so stiff and intractable that he was unable to use a pen, and, as he explained to Rice, and to Curtis the lawyer in a letter, it was easier to spell out his correspondence on the machine with his left hand than to draw it laboriously with the same untutored member. The cuts on his right hand and arm were healed, and the bruises had vanished; but he was acutely conscious at times of some damaged nerve or ligament at the junction of hand and wrist. Nothing could be done surgically, the doctors at Palm Beach had assured him. Time alone could cure, and Time is a surgeon not to be hurried.

He soon gained surprising efficiency in his one-handed manipulation of the typewriter, and on Friday, the fourth day of residence at The Dene, he spent an hour after breakfast in writing a letter. In the first instance he made a rough draft, which he corrected, copied, and burned. Then he addressed an envelop, and summoned Rice.

"Don't mail this in the letterbox," he said; "but take it yourself to the postoffice."

The valet understood that the missive was not meant to be scrutinized by other eyes, and hurried away on the errand, the township of Saginaw being nearly a mile distant. Being quite a human person, he glanced at the address, and was positively startled on finding that it was intended for "Mrs. Elstead," at Narragansett Pier. Now, Rice was well aware that Mrs. Waverton had reverted to her maiden name, and his sedate face creased in an appreciative grin.

"Good luck to you!" he murmured, as the letter disappeared in a window slit of the Saginaw postoffice. "If it wasn't for Miss Kathleen, there mightn't be much hope; but now I'll lay a five-spot to a hayseed that that blessed kid will bring 'em together again."

Rice, it may be observed, liked taking long odds; so he lost a remarkable number of bets.

ON Sunday and Monday he cast an ob-servant eye over his master's mail; but no envelop bore the Narragansett postmark. Indeed, Waverton's correspondence was growing smaller every day. Rice himself, at first, used to send a stereotyped acknowledgment of nearly all letters, in which "Mr. Claude Waverton regrets that his recent accident prevents him from answering yours of the —th," and this style of rejoinder exercised a marked effect in lessening the volume of condolences and anxious inquiries that poured in from clubs, theaters, hotels, and sporting centers like Chicago and Saratoga.

Rice, of course, had seen Mrs. Waverton's handwriting quite recently, and he fancied he would recognize it. He was not mistaken, though,—to use his own expressive phrase, it fair gev' him a turn, it did,—when the expected letter arrived on Monday evening, by hand, and addressed to himself.

DEAR MR. RICE (it ran).—I am here, in Saginaw, at the Rev. Mr. Norton's house. Can you come and see me for a few minutes, and as soon as possible? I believe that no one in the place, other than Mr. and Mrs. Norton, knows of my presence, and I wish the fact to be kept quite private at present.

Sincerely, DORIS WAVERTON.

"Who brought this?" he gasped, gazing wide-eyed at the footman who handed him the note.

"One of Mrs. Norton's gals—an' a pretty one too," came the answer with a wink.

That wink was helpful. It restored Rice to a semblance of self-possession.

"Oh, if she's a pretty one, I must attend to her without delay," he smirked, and the footman announced in the servants' hall that old Rice wasn't quite such a dyed-in-the-wool bachelor as he made himself out to be.

On his way to the door the valet determined that, come what might, he would see his former mistress, and he told the waiting messenger that he would be at the parsonage a few minutes after eight o'clock.

HE rushed through his duties when Waverton had dressed for dinner, and, by a rapid scurry on a bicycle, was at Norton's house at the appointed time. He was shown into the study, and there found Doris Waverton, who was attired in a traveling costume, and wore a large hat draped with a dark blue motoring veil. This, however, was lifted at the moment, and her charming face was flushed with excitement and anxiety.

"I sent for you, Rice," she explained instantly, "because I did not care to trust my affairs to any other person at The Dene, and

signed my former name to prevent any chance of error. I want to see my—to see Mr. Waverton tonight if possible. How can I manage it?"

Rice was wrung with conflicting emotions. He was puzzled, pleased, flattered, at the same moment; but he could only blurt out a commonplace opinion that if she would authorize him to ask Mr. Claude—

"Oh, I don't mean in that way," she interrupted eagerly. "I am afraid, after my Rhode Island experiences, and from circumstances that have come to my knowledge since, that if Mr. Waverton knew I was in Saginaw he would take every means in his power to avoid me. But I must see him, speak to him—I really must! Don't you understand, Rice? I want to take him by surprise, to come upon him so unexpectedly that he cannot refuse to discuss certain matters with me. You will help me, won't you? I am quite alone here, and I have no one else to appeal to. Can you manage this thing for me, somehow?"

Very beautiful and pathetic she looked in her pleading, and the valet, who might have been a knight errant had he lived a few hundred years earlier, vowed that he would be her slave if it cost him his job; which meant far more to him than the fret and fume of life to a light-headed troubadour.

His right hand rose to the shaved upper lip, and his left traveled to the small of his back.

"Well, Ma'am, seein' as it's you, I'll do what I can—"

"Ah, I was sure of you, Rice!" broke in Doris, with a catch in her voice that went to the man's heart.

"You see, it's this way, Ma'am," he went on. "Bein' a fine night, an' not givin' much time to his dinner, Mr. Claude will probably light a cigar and go out for a stroll with Bob—"

"Bob!" she exclaimed. "Who is Bob?"

"The old setter, Ma'am, the lame dog."

"Oh, I remember. He was my particular friend. But—" She hesitated in a bewildered way until the urgency of her mission drove aside all other considerations. "You mean that I may meet Mr. Waverton in the park?"

"It's almost a certainty, Ma'am. If you was to go now to the boathouse by the lake he will probably pass that way before nine o'clock."

"But if he does not? Tonight, just because I happen to be awaiting him, he may remain in the house."

Rice coughed, sure sign of a diplomatic utterance. "In that case, Ma'am, if Mr. Claude stops indoors, he will be in the library, an' the drawing room windows will be open. I'll take care that they are."

"Ah!" Doris sighed her gratitude, and opened the gold purse that hung from her neck by a chain.

"If you don't mind, Ma'am, I'd rather—"

She closed the purse with a snap, and smiled brightly. "I quite understand, Rice," she said. "You are acting as my true well-wisher, not as one whom I could pay for services rendered."

Rice's pallid face flushed with pleasure. "I can only hope, Ma'am—" he blurted forth, but, recollecting himself, checked the expression of a pious desire, and went on to ask if she needed any assistance in reaching the boathouse, since she would probably wish to avoid the main road.

She laughed at that. "I have not forgotten my way about the place," she said. "By walking a quarter of a mile down the sycamore avenue I can enter the park by climbing a gate, and then take the path through the wood to the lake. It is not dark, and the distance is short; so there is nothing to be afraid of, and a scampering rabbit or two will not alarm me."

SO the valet raced back to the house, and, watching developments from an upper window, heard Waverton whistle to the dog, and saw the pair descend an Italian terrace and stride off across the sloping pasture land that led in a gentle descent to the broad expanse of Lake Champlain.

Rice looked at his watch,—ten minutes to nine. "It's as good as a play," he chuckled. "Now, I wonder if it will work out all right? What a facer it 'ud be for Mrs. Delamar if Mr. Claude an' his lawful wife kem together again!"

Meanwhile, Doris had gone to her self-appointed tryst. The avenue she had spoken of was a public road lined with sycamore trees, and halfway along its straight and level arcade a gate gave access to a densely planted wood which provided cover for some of the pheasants Waverton had imported. The gate was locked; but this active young woman made light of that, and a "drive," or shooting road, that led to the lake was really less gloomy than the arched-in avenue.

The drive stopped somewhat short of a



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